

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02  
SSM-05 SIG-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00  
USIE-00 INRE-00 /094 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:RUNDELAND:DP  
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN  
S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)  
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)  
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW  
NEA - MR. COLLUMS  
NEA/ARN - MR. REUTHER  
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

-----182247Z 070480 /64

O 182117Z MAY 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE  
USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION SINAI IMMEDIATE  
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AMCONSUL DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD  
E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 18

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS  
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MAY 18, 1977:

Q. COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS NOW, AND  
HOW THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS STRUCK BY IT -- OR WHATEVER?

A. YOU ARE ASKING FOR A COMMENT? ALSO AN ASSESSMENT?  
WELL, JOE, AT THIS STAGE I HAVE NO COMMENT, ANALYSIS, NOR  
INTERPRETATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT ISRAEL WILL NEED SOME TIME TO PUT A  
GOVERNMENT TOGETHER. ONCE THAT HAPPENS WE WILL WANT TO GET  
ON WITH OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND THE ARAB GOVERN-  
MENTS, ABOUT HOW TO MOVE THE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD. THE U-  
NITED STATES GOVERNMENT REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED TO THAT  
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PROCESS.

Q. HAS THIS BEEN CLEARED AT THE WHITE HOUSE?

A. THIS HAS BEEN CLEARED APPROPRIATELY.

Q. CLEARED APPROPRIATELY?

A. YES.

Q. DOES SECRETARY VANCE KNOW ABOUT THIS?

A. HE SURE DOES.

Q. FRED, WHEN YOU SAY THAT IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO PUT  
A GOVERNMENT TOGETHER, IS IT LIKELY THAT THE TIMETABLE THAT  
THE ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN WORKING ON IS GOING TO BE  
DELAYED AS A RESULT OF THE ELECTION RESULTS -- THE FACT  
THAT A NEW GROUP OF PEOPLE WILL BE COMING INTO THE GOVERN-  
MENT OF ISRAEL?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO SPECULATE ON FUTURE EFFECTS.  
THE SECOND POINT I MAKE IS, I DON'T THINK WE EVER  
LAID DOWN A TIMETABLE.

THE SECRETARY MOST RECENTLY SAID THERE WAS -- IT WAS VERY INDEFINITE AS TO WHEN -- WELL, WITH REGARD TO HIS TRIP, FOR INSTANCE, TO THE MIDDLE EAST -- IT WAS INDEFINITE AS TO WHEN THAT WOULD TAKE PLACE BECAUSE IT MIGHT TAKE SOME TIME TO PUT A GOVERNMENT TOGETHER. HE SAID JUNE, OR JULY --

Q. DOES HE STILL EXPECT THE NEW ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES BEFORE HE MAKES HIS MIDDLE EAST TRIP?

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A. WELL, ONCE THE NEW ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS FORMED, KEN, AS THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY BOTH SAID, WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING WITH THE NEW PRIME MINISTER.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT FEEL THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S OUTSPOKEN COMMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST HELP TO BRING ABOUT THE LIKUD VICTORY?

A. I AM REALLY NOT IN A POSITION TO ANSWER THAT KIND OF QUESTION, BERNIE.

Q. ALL RIGHT, LET ME TRY IT THIS WAY: SHIMON PERES IS QUOTED HERE IN THE BALTIMORE SUN AS PUTTING THE BLAME FOR THE DEFEAT ON THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, AS HE SPOKE TO THE NEWSMEN IN TEL AVIV. QUOTE THERE WAS A CHANGE IN THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND OUR PEOPLE WERE NOT SURE WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE UNITED STATES. UNQUOTE. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT?

A. BERNIE, I WILL HAVE TO REFRAIN FROM ANY COMMENT OR ANALYSIS ON THE ELECTION OUTCOME.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US WHETHER OR NOT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS REALLY SURPRISED BY THE ELECTION RESULTS?

THERE IS A REPORT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE DEPARTMENT MISJUDGED THE POSSIBLE RESULTS. IS THIS RIGHT?

A. JOE, I WILL HAVE TO STICK WITH NOT COMMENTING ON THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION.

Q. PERHAPS, FRED, YOU CAN GIVE US AN ASSESSMENT NOW OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW OF THE PROSPECTS FOR A MOVEMENT IN THE PEACE SETTLEMENT. YOU EXPRESS THE HOPE AND THE INTENTION TO PUSH FOR IT.

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DOES THE ELECTION RESULTS AND THE APPARENT ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY MR. BEGIN, AFFECT THE EXPECTATION FOR A PEACE SETTLEMENT?

A. KEN, AGAIN THAT'S SORT OF THE SAME QUESTION. I CAN'T EXPRESS ANY EXPECTATIONS, OR MAKE ANY KIND OF ANALYSIS GROWING OUT OF THE ELECTION RESULTS IN ISRAEL.

WITH REGARD TO A CONTINUATION OF THE PEACE PROCESS, OF COURSE, THE SAUDI ARABIAN CROWN PRINCE FAHD IS DUE HERE NEXT WEEK TO TALK TO THE PRESIDENT, AS A PART OF OUR CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS ON HOW TO PROCEED NEXT. THAT IS ABOUT THE EXTENT OF WHAT I CAN SAY ABOUT OUR VIEW OF HOW WE ARE MOVING AHEAD WITH FURTHERING THE PEACE PROCESS.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US WHAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT EXPECTATION WAS AS TO WHO WOULD WIN THE ELECTION, PLEASE?

A. I CAN'T BERNIE.

Q. WHY CAN'T YOU? WHAT --

A. I AM SIMPLY NOT GOING TO GET INTO AN ANALYSIS OR INTERPRETATION --

Q. WELL, I AM NOT ASKING YOU ABOUT AN ANALYSIS. I AM ASKING: WHAT WAS THE EXPECTATION IN THIS BUILDING AS TO WHO WOULD WIN THAT ELECTION?

A. I DON'T HAVE A READOUT ON WHAT OUR EXPECTATION WAS -- IF WE HAVE ONE, OFFICIALLY.

Q. CAN YOU TAKE THAT QUESTION?

A. I CAN TAKE IT, BUT WITHOUT EXPECTATION OF GETTING ANY KIND OF ANSWER TO IT.  
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Q. WELL I WOULD LIKE TO PURSUE THIS. WHY CAN'T WE KNOW WHAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD THOUGHT -- MIGHT HAVE ESTIMATED AS TO THE WINNER OF THAT ELECTION? WHY CAN'T THAT BE SHARED WITH US?

A. BECAUSE I DON'T THINK, IN ANY CASE THAT I CAN RECALL, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALLY HAS COME OUT AND SAID: HERE IS WHAT OUR ELECTION PROJECTION WAS ON ANY ELECTION, ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, THAT'S WHY.

Q. WELL --

A. AND I DON'T THINK WE ARE GOING TO GET INTO AN ANALYSIS OF ELECTIONS IN OTHER PEOPLES' COUNTRIES.

Q. WITHOUT GETTING INTO AN ANALYSIS, FRED, DOES THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVE THAT THIS TURN OF EVENTS WILL SLOW DOWN THE PEACE PROCESS?

A. I AM GOING TO HAVE TO GO BACK TO MY PREVIOUS STATEMENT, AND NOT COMMENT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION, IN ANY WAY.

Q. DOES THE SECRETARY, OR DOES THE ADMINISTRATION STILL CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT, AS THE SECRETARY SAID LAST WEEK, THAT THERE BE A RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE THIS YEAR? AND INDEED, QUOTE THIS FALL, UNQUOTE, I THINK WAS HIS PHRASE.

A. BEYOND THE EXPRESSION I HAVE JUST MADE, ABOUT WANTING TO GET ON WITH OUR CONSULTATIONS ON HOW TO MOVE THE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD, I AM NOT PREPARED TO SAY SPECIFICALLY WHAT WE INTEND TO DO OR WHAT WE MIGHT LIKE TO DO.

Q. THEN YOU WON'T REAFFIRM WHAT THE SECRETARY SAID LAST UNCLASSIFIED

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WEEK, THAT IT IS CONSIDERED TO BE VERY IMPORTANT THAT THERE BE A MEETING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE THIS YEAR?

A. I HAVE NO REASON TO MODIFY WHAT THE SECRETARY SAID LAST WEEK WITH REGARD TO THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

Q. FRED, WHEN THE FINAL COUNT WAS MADE IN THE ELECTION IN INDIA, THE DEPARTMENT, I BELIEVE, VOLUNTEERED A STATEMENT ON IT. CAN WE EXPECT ONE HERE AFTER THE FINAL COUNT IS, IN ISRAEL?

A. I DON'T -- I HAVE NO EXPECTATION OF COMMENT -- AS I SAY, AT THIS STAGE I HAVE NO COMMENT, ANALYSIS OR INTERPRETATION ON THE OUTCOME.

Q. I MEAN, THERE IS A PRECEDENT FOR --

A. WELL I AM JUST GOING TO STICK WITH THAT FOR TODAY.

Q. DO YOU EXPECT, FRED, TO SEND A MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO JERUSALEM, ON BEHALF OF THE LIKUD VICTORY?

A. YOU HAVE TO, OF COURSE, CHECK WITH THE WHITE HOUSE ON THAT, BUT I WOULD PRESUME WE WOULD DO WHATEVER IS NORMAL WITH ANY ELECTION OF THIS SORT.

Q. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THERE WAS THIS SURPRISING

RESULT, AND THE DEPARTMENT DOUBTLESSLY IS ASSESSING THE DEVELOPMENTS AHEAD, CAN YOU SET FORTH FOR US JUST WHAT THE U.S. POSITION IS, AS OF TODAY -- OR IF YOU DO IT TOMORROW, -- WITH RESPECT TO WHAT IS THE PALESTINIAN HOMELAND -- WHERE IS IT -- WHAT IS OUR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE PLO -- IN TERMS OF WHAT THE PLO HAS TO DO BEFORE WE COMMUNICATE WITH IT.

A. I'VE GOT NO CHANGE TO OFFER YOU ON THAT SUBJECT, BE-  
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YOND WHAT I HAVE SAID PREVIOUSLY SEVERAL TIMES, JOE, IN ANSWER TO SIMILAR QUESTIONS.

Q. YES. WELL YOU MEAN: THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS NOT CHANGED ITS POLICY -- THE PLO MUST CHANGE ITS CHARTER TO --

A. THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN OUR POSITION IN THIS REGARD.

Q. WELL, BUT JUST SO THAT WE KNOW WHAT THE POSITION IS TODAY AND NOT WHAT -- WELL IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN CHANGED SINCE --

A. I WILL JUST STICK WITH THE ANSWER I HAVE GIVEN YOU ON SIMILAR QUESTIONS, IN RECENT MONTHS.

Q. YES, YOU HAVE -- BUT I MEAN: HAS IT CHANGED AT ALL, IN ANY WAY? CAN WE ASSUME, THEN, THAT THE U.S. POSITION

TOWARDS THE PLO IS THAT IT MUST AMEND ITS CHARTER TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL AS A SOVEREIGN STATE?

A. OUR POSITION ON THE PLO QUESTION REMAINS UNCHANGED.

Q. IN ALL THOSE RESPECTS -- 242, 338 AND SO INTO THE U.N.?

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. FRED, YOU SAID EARLIER, THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED TO THE PEACE PROCESS. HOW ABOUT THE COMMITMENT, THE BASIC COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY, ET CETERA?

A. THAT HAS CERTAINLY BEEN REITERATED IN VERY DIRECT TERMS IN RECENT DAYS, BY THE PRESIDENT AND I CERTAINLY CANNOT ADD TO THAT. THAT HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR.  
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Q. BUT HAS THAT BEEN AFFECTED IN ANY WAY BY THE RESULT OF

THIS ELECTION?

A. NO.

Q. FRED, HAS MR. VANCE, OR ANY OTHER RANKING AMERICAN  
OFFICIAL IN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, EVER MET WITH  
MR. BEGIN? DO THEY KNOW HIM?

A. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER SECRETARY VANCE HAS, OR NOT. I  
CAN'T SPEAK FOR ANYBODY OUTSIDE THE BUILDING; BUT I WOULD  
HAVE TO CHECK ON WHETHER OR NOT MR. VANCE HAS EVER MET  
HIM. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. FRED, DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON SOME OF THE REACTIONS  
IN THE ARAB WORLD THAT THE VICTORY IN ISRAEL BY LIKUD MAY  
BRING A NEXT WAR CLOSER?

A. NO, I HAVE NO COMMENT.

CHRISTOPHER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

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